Food, Clothing, and Dwellings

Compared to a good tipi, the shack of the frontiersman was a poor makeshift. The tipi shed wind and water and was warm and well ventilated. It could be set up within fifteen minutes and could be struck in less time. In hot weather the cooking was done outside. Actually, during much of the summer and autumn little shelter was really needed. In the permanent camp a brush arbor was often erected in hot weather, under which the entire family or groups of families found refuge from the summer heat. The roof was flat and made of leafy boughs supported by posts seven or eight feet high. The sides were left open to permit full benefit from the breeze. Most Comanches today, even those who have substantial houses, build brush arbors in their yards for lounging and summer sleeping. (There are no bedbugs in the arbors.) Arbors of hooped saplings reminiscent of Shoshone wickiups were also used.

Some owners painted their tipis with a number of encircling stripes and with geometric designs on both the lining and the outside cover. The average tipi, however, did not have the added touch of the artist.

The furnishing of a tipi was like all else in Comanche economic life—simple and highly adapted to mobility. Devices for comfort were a comparatively modern innovation, since it is inconceivable that in the days when the Indians were foot travelers and carried most of their possessions on their backs they would load themselves down with luxuries. In the center of the tipi a round hole was dug for the fire. It has been contended that the only difference in a Kiowa and a Comanche camp was in the fire-hole. The Comanches made their fire-hole about fifteen inches in diameter, while the Kiowas made theirs about two feet.[84]

Before the arrival of the white man, the Comanches produced fire by means of the fire drill. The method consisted of hand twirling a hard stick, held vertically in a hole in a horizontal block of softer material, until the heat ignited the Spanish-moss tinder or birds' nests packed about the hole. Fire drills were kept in cases of buffalo horn, called *na'a:*. Flint and steel for fire-making were among the first articles introduced by Mexican traders. After the introduction of gun powder, the Comanches found that a fire could be started more quick-

[84] Marcy, *Adventure on Red River*, 57.

281 skins soft and flexible no matter how often they were exposed to moisture.

Every woman made the clothing for herself and her family, as was explained in the previous chapter. From the tanned skins the women also made various kinds of soft leather pouches, among them the long fringed ones for the men's smoking utensils. Some of these [531] bags were decorated with beadwork after the arrival of the white traders, but informants insist that porcupine-quill embroidery was unusual among the Comanches.

281 463 Although every woman learned to make clothing and bags, it seems that there were only a relatively few who became expert at designing and cutting the cover for a tipi. A mother or wife who wanted to make a tipi gathered the poles, stripped them of their bark and pared them down to the desired size, and possibly pointed the butts. She then most likely went to an expert tipi-maker and asked for her help. She might offer her a present then, or it might be given afterwards. A day for the work was agreed upon. Other women would be invited to join the "quilting party," but the expert was in complete charge and gave the instructions. She usually did the most critical cutting and fitting. During the day the hostess provided her guests with a feast. Although the women worked together, there appears to have been no organization of tipi makers.[2]

492 [463] [727] Since the Comanches spent much of their time on horseback, horse equipage was an important item. Although both men and women worked at it, saddle-making tended to be the specialty of men who were no longer active in war. In later times, however, Mexican captives became specialists at the trade. Saddles were mostly of a modified Spanish type. They were generally made of American elm in three pieces: the bars or seat proper, the pommel, and the cantle. Each part was laboriously shaved down into the desired shape and carefully fitted. The pommel and cantle were made high with but slight pitch; the bars or seat were moderate in length so that the saddle was deep and narrow. Holes were drilled with a red hot awl, the joints daubed with glue, and then the parts were laced firmly together by means of green deer sinew. The joints were scraped and rubbed smooth, and the frame was smeared with an ochre paint. Over

[2] Informants: Kills Something; She Invites Her Relatives.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

ing that paper was used for padding inside the shields, Anglo-American pioneers were quite puzzled at the Comanche interest in books. 411

The surface of the shield was stretched into a convex or saucer shape with the convex surface to the outside. A convex surface would readily deflect a blow. The shield was then hung up to dry. Sometimes the shield-maker would unlace the shield and remove the wooden frame, adding, of course, additional packing. This increased the safety of the shield, since a bullet could penetrate the wooden frame more easily than the packing.

A buckskin cover was usually fitted over the flint-like shield, much as a cover is drawn over a spare automobile tire. It was drawn in on the under side by means of a buckskin thong laced through eyelet holes around the edges. Through the hide itself were bored two pairs of holes, and through each pair was passed a loop or band of rawhide or buckskin. By means of these two bands the shield was fastened to the left arm near the elbow in such a manner as not to interfere with the free use of the hand.

After the shield had thoroughly dried and cured, it was treated by setting it up as a target, and if a bullet or an arrow pierced it when fired from a distance of about fifty yards, it found a place in the debris of the camp. In times of action the Indian manipulated his arm so as to make any blow strike the shield at an angle. Very few bullets fired from old-fashioned rifles would penetrate a well-constructed shield unless the bullet struck the surface perpendicularly, a near impossibility when the shield was in the hands of one expert in the art of using it.

The Anglo-American pioneers and soldiers who knew the Comanches well relate that their shields were usually adorned with three kinds of insignia. Bear teeth worn or painted on a shield indicated that the owner was a great hunter or had the toughness of the bear; scalps attached to or painted on the shield indicated its owner to be a mighty warrior, and horse or mule tails that he was an accomplished raider. The materials were attached by means of buckskin strings to the under side of the shield. Around the rim of the outside cover feathers were attached and held in place with sinew. Comanche informants maintained that there should have been an even number, usually four but possibly six or more. The arrangement made it pos- 411 536 [801]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

411 sible for the ruffle of feathers to be kept in constant motion when the
●531 shield was shaken, thus serving to bewilder the eye and disturb the aim of the enemy. Hair was sometimes substituted for the feather fringe. A plain cover without decoration protected feathers and paintings when the shield was not in use.[19]

Some Comanche shields were painted with simple geometric decorations. On at least one specimen which has survived the heavy lines are painted red and the narrow ones green. The great majority of shields, however, were unpainted and made without ceremony. There is not sufficient evidence either to substantiate or to disprove Professor Lowie's contention that each semi-military society had its shield which served as an insignia, symbolical of its rank and position.

411 Originally carried in order to ward off missiles and spear thrusts,
778 the shield in later times rendered a protection that was not only physical but also spiritual. Indeed, according to Comanche informants, some shields possessed mystical power and were "sort of sacred." There were several ways by which a warrior might obtain such a shield. It might be a gift from an older friend or a relative, although the owner must be very careful to whom he gave his shield. Furthermore, some shields had such strong power that they could not be given away; they had to be thrown in a running stream to wash away the power. Such shields were ringed with tabus. They were rarely uncovered except in actual battle. They could never be brought within a tipi. Most of them had to be stored at least half a mile away
[84] from the camp. If this seems a foolish place to keep a shield in the event of a surprise attack, it should be realized that for a menstruating woman to come near it or for a person with greasy hands to touch it would completely destroy its power and insure the wounding of its owner. To get his shield prior to a raid, a warrior made a half-circle to the spot where it hung; he moved the shield in a circle and then returned to the camp from the opposite direction, completing a whole circle with his route.

[19] This account of the construction and the utility of the shield is from statements by informants Medicine Woman and Wiley Yellowfish; also, Haley, "Charles Goodnight's Indian Recollections," *loc. cit.*, 20; Marcy, *Adventure on Red River*, 160–61; Lehmann, *op. cit.*, 25–26; Baylor, "Recollections of the Comanche Indians," *loc. cit.*, 374; Babb., *op. cit.*, 40–42; Parker, *op. cit.*, 195; Burnet, "American Aborigines, Indians of Texas," *loc. cit.*, Vol. I (June 5, 1824), 177.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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Albert Atocknie (Lone Tipi), in 1924

Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

[Facing p. 350]

7: Richardson D-4 (no date) 1929
NO6 Comanche NO6

able sum of money building on the Arkansas a village for a certain band to move into. The Indians moved in, and all went well, until the wife of a prominent chief died and the whole band immediately moved out and sought a new location a great way off. The Spanish officer who reported this unfortunate occurrence explained that these Indians had many superstitions, one being that when any prominent person died the camp should be abandoned and the place henceforth avoided.[25] We have the account of a similar occurrence which happened many years later when the son of chief Pah-hau-ca, of the Southern Comanches, died or was killed and the chief abandoned his camp and chattels and moved far north to a new camp.[26] The Comanches would fight desperately to rescue the body of a fallen comrade so long as the scalp was intact; but the moment this was removed they would abandon the body and would not even touch it to bury it. According to some accounts they also held the heart of an animal in veneration and generally avoided touching it when dressing a carcass.[27]

In literature and art the attainments of the Comanches were slight. They had no system of writing other than that of crude pictures and these commonly pertained to wars and the chase. On skins carefully dressed, they often drew designs, a common one being the sun in the center with different colored rays of light radiating out in finely drawn lines. Their shields were generally adorned with pictures and it may be that they, like their allies the Kiowas, had a system of Heraldry.[28] Their paint was made from colored chalks or clay and their brushes from tufts of hair. For drawings of a more temporary character charcoal often served as the pencil and any smooth surface like bone, a board, or the bark of a tree served for canvas.[29]

They had a system of enumeration, but apparently little or no knowledge of the rudiments of arithmetic. The moon periods served as time units; but it does not seem that they had a calendar of any kind, other than the knowledge of the four seasons. They

25. Ugarte y Loyola to Don Fernando de la Concha, July 22, 1785, enclosing copies of reports made by the officers in New Mexico. Ms. Provincias Internas, Mexico City, Tomo 65, University of Texas Transcripts.

26. Statement of Luis Sanches, interpreter, May 1844; Ms. Texas Indian Papers, Texas State Library, Austin.

27. Smithwick, The Evolution of a State, 181.

28. See Mooney, Kiowa Calendar, 230.

29. Smithwick, The Evolution of a State, 180-181; Dr. Ferdinand Roemer, Texas (Bonn, 1849) 393 ff.

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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Sanapia's mother, 1909.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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statement of how many wives Quanah had at the time the house was built. He had a total of seven from the time the Comanche roll was made out in the seventies until the country was opened for settlement in 1901, at which time five were still living. Prior to the time the rolls were made, he had two Mescalero Apache wives. The name of only one of these, To-ye-yeh, has survived. The two desired to return to their own people, and Quanah consented. There is no record of children born to these Apache wives.

One interesting story connected with the house is that in the early 1890s Quanah had fourteen stars painted on the roof, including two on the summer kitchen and two on the smokehouse. It seems that during an army maneuver a brigadier general stopped at the house to ask permission to cross Quanah's property. Quanah was mystified by the many stars the general displayed. There were stars on his vehicle, on a flag the vehicle carried, and on the general's collar and shoulders. When he was informed that the stars denoted the general's command of possibly three thousand troops, Quanah decided he, too, deserved some stars, for he had commanded even more warriors than the brigadier. Hence the stars on his roof.

Quanah, who was probably born around 1852, died in this house in February, 1911. To-pay was his last surviving wife. She died in 1962, when she was more than ninety years old. She is credited with having said that Quanah's greatness was not that he was able to lead his tribe in the ways of peace, but that he was able to bring about peace and harmony in a household of several wives and numerous children.

168 traditional Comanche culture fundamentally changed, owing to the extermination of the buffalo—their staff of life—their pacification by the U.S. Army, and their confinement to a reservation in present-day Oklahoma.

Berlandier was not the first white man to collect artifacts from the Comanche and their neighbors. As early as 1779 Governor Juan Bautista de Anza of New Mexico presented to Teodoro de Croix, Military Commander of the Internal Provinces of New Spain, the war headdresses taken from the bodies of the prominent Comanche war chief, Cuerna Verde (Green Horn), and his second in command, Jumping Eagle, after a battle on September 3, 1779, during which the Spanish decisively defeated Cuerna Verde's Comanche.[2] During the fall of 1807 Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike, pioneer American explorer of the Southern Plains, sent Thomas Jefferson an Apache quiver and arrows and informed the President that he had "collected a variety of curiosities of various savage tribes through which we passed."[3] Unfortunately, I have found no record of the preservation of these earlier artifacts in public or private collections.

The very great majority of Comanche specimens in the museums of this country and abroad were collected within the Reservation Period—i.e. after 1875. The earlier objects in the Berlandier collection provide a solid base for future studies of trends and developments in the history of Comanche Indian arts and crafts. Even though they number less than 20 specimens, the ones Berlandier collected range from war equipment to costume and containers; they illustrate Comanche skills in featherwork, in dressing animal hides, and in decorating tough rawhide and soft skin surfaces with painted designs and trade beads during the second quarter of the 19th century. And they show the use at that time of trade cloth, rolled metal cones, and brass tacks in decorating articles of Indian make.

Comanche shields Figures 19–23 Plate 17

The Berlandier collection contains three fine examples of the principle defensive weapon of the Comanche—the rawhide shield—commonly made from the breast of the buffalo, where the hide was thickest. Each shield was furnished with a cover of soft skin which enclosed and protected it when not in use.

In his written description of shields Berlandier makes repeated mention of the Comanche custom of tieing small animal skins to the fronts of the shields as war medicines.[4] The shield pictured in Figure 19 still has fragments of two pocket gophers (of the family Geomyinae) tied to it. Appar-

2. Thomas, 1932, pp. 134–36, 142.

3. Jackson, 1966, vol. 2, pp. 273–76. The quiver and arrows probably were from the Lipan Apache. Two of the arrows were deposited in Peale's Museum in Philadelphia and were entered in their Accession Book under the date May 4, 1808. (Accession Book, Peale's Museum, Dec. 4, 1804–October 1842, in Historical Society of Pennsylvania Library, Philadelphia.) These arrows were also mentioned in the Philadelphia *Aurora*, July 27, 1808.

4. See pages 54, 91, 116.

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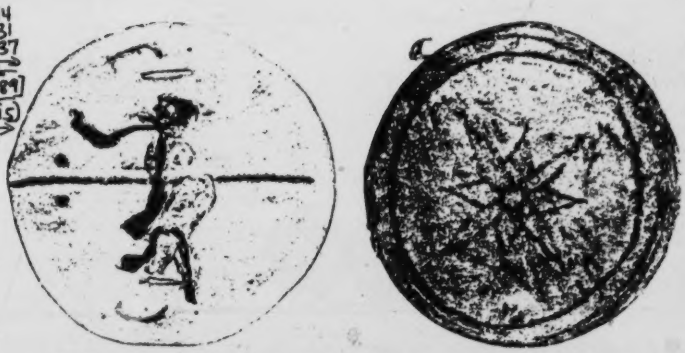

FIGURES 19–20. Comanche shield, with medicines attached, and painted cover. (USNM 4432.)

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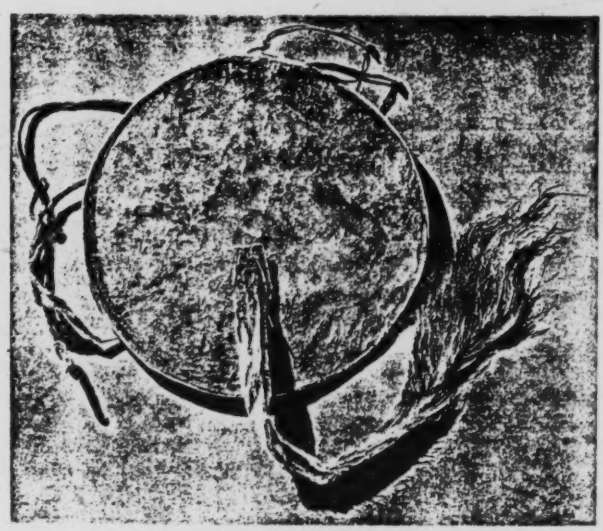

FIGURE 21. Comanche painted shield cover. (Field Museum Gr.579.)

ently the body cavities of these small animals were stuffed with grass before they were tied to the shield. The shield is 59 cm. in diameter and 5 to 6 mm. thick at the edge. Its front surface is further decorated with a painted reddish-brown stripe about 2.5 cm. wide, flanked with white stripes, two small green circles (one above and one below the stripe), and two U-shaped designs in green. The narrow loops of rawhide which pass through the shield surface provide an attachment at the back of the shield for a carrying strap of horsehide 7.5 cm. wide.

This shield is provided with a loosely fitted cover of soft skin, 60 cm. in diameter, which is held in place by a buckskin drawstring that gathers the outer edge of the cover at the back of the shield when pulled tight and tied. This cover is painted in a geometric design composed of a thick black border and an eight-pointed motive outlined in black and filled in with yellow paint (see Figure 20). The latter may be a conventionalized sun symbol.

A second shield base is but 31 cm. in diameter and 4 to 6 mm. thick at the edge. Only its cover is decorated (see Figure 21). A black line encircles the circumference of the cover; black and red concentric circles are painted at the center, and a hoofed mammal with horns—a buffalo or deer?—is painted in black. The tail of a cow, with the hair left on, is tied to the center of the cover as a pendant.[5]

The most elaborately decorated of the three shields is shown in Figures 22 and 23. Its cover (Figure 23) is 53.5 cm. in diameter and bears a conventionalized painting of a bear in black (12 cm. long), a black circle filled with black dots at the center, a black stripe below this, and two black dots to the left of the center. Four small feathers are also tied to the center of the cover. The base of this shield (Figure 22) is 50 cm. in diameter and 5 to 6 mm. thick at the edge. A border of red trade cloth 7 cm. wide is tied at intervals to the outer edge of the shield base. To the inner edge of this cloth are tied 73 pelican feathers as pendants. The trade cloth is decorated with a rectangle of blue pony beads about 7 by 6.5 cm. in size.

The base of this shield (with trade cloth and feather border removed to reveal the shield painting completely) is pictured in color on Plate 18.A The large, horned figure in the center may represent either a buffalo or a man (much simplified and conventionalized) wearing a horned headdress. The two monochrome human figures, flanking the central figure, one black and one yellow, are rendered in the same style. Both have featureless rings for heads; short, solid necks; solid, roughly rectangular bodies; and linear ex-

5. This specimen was cat. no. 1470 in the Smithsonian collections but was transferred to the Field Museum, Chicago, in 1901 and is preserved in that museum as cat. no. 62579. Donald Collier, Chief Curator, Department of Anthropology, Field Museum, has kindly supplied photographs and measurements of this specimen.

A [See Plate 17, p. 180-A—Analyst.]

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FIGURES 22–23. Comanche decorated shield and painted cover. (USNM 443a.)

[p. 172]

tremities. The arms are bent at the elbows and end in three-fingered hands. The straight legs are turned up at their extremities to form feet.

In its rudimentary simplicity the style of human figure represented by this Comanche artist resembles some of the human figures pictured on exposed rock surfaces and in caves of Texas as recorded by archeologists. A. T. Jackson has expressed the opinion that "a few of the historic paintings in West-Central Texas, and perhaps elsewhere, may have been made by the Comanches."[6] The styles of human and animal figures appearing on these three shields are essentially as primitive as are the paintings on rock surfaces and evidence no influence from the white man's artistic traditions.

Black and yellow are the colors most prominently used in these shield paintings. In 1837 Noah Smithwick observed that the Comanche regarded a yellow substance, resembling ochre, as having "power to turn aside any missile which might be directed against a body on which it had been rubbed."[7] The shield paintings were essentially protective designs.

Comanche Quivers Figures 24–25

Two Comanche quivers in the Berlandier collection are pictured in Figures 24 and 25. The first (Figure 24) is of horsehide, 69 cm. long, and decorated with a cut fringe at the back, as well as at the ends of the 5.5 cm. wide rawhide shoulder strap. The second quiver is longer (75 cm.), of horse or deerhide, with a rear extension of buffalo hide, hair inside, about 9 cm. in length. Its rawhide shoulder sling is but 3 cm. wide. Each quiver is fitted with bent wooden spacers which prevent the case from twisting or bending out of shape. Unlike the Comanche specimen illustrated by Bollaert (Figure 18, top center), these quivers are not combined with bow cases. Nor are they made of white wolf hide, which Berlandier learned the Comanche preferred for protecting their weapons because of the strong supernatual powers they attributed to the white wolf.[8]

Comanche Powder Horn Figure 26

Powder horns pictured by Lino Sánchez y Tapia as carried by Lipan, Comanche, Tonkawa, Tawehash, Kickapoo, Koasati, and Karankawa Indians are a dark color, suggesting that they were of buffalo horn.[9] A Comanche powder horn from the Berlandier collection (Figure 26), however, is of domesticated cattle, large numbers of which had reverted to the wild state in Texas before the 1830s. This piece measures 8 cm. in diameter at the base and 2 cm. at the tip. A wooden plug, painted red, has been inserted in the base. Presumably a smaller wooden plug was placed in the tip end to prevent powder from falling out. The horn is decorated

6. Jackson, 1938, p. 463. The same source illustrates a wide variety of conventionalized human figures occurring in pictographs at Texas sites (plates CCLII–CCLXIX), as well as the representation of a buffalo horn headdress painted on the shield of Comanche Jack, which was used by him in raids into Texas prior to 1880 (plate CCXLIII).

7. Smithwick, 1900, p. 191.

8. Berlandier, 1844, p. 180.

9. See Plates 1–6, 11, 14, and 15.

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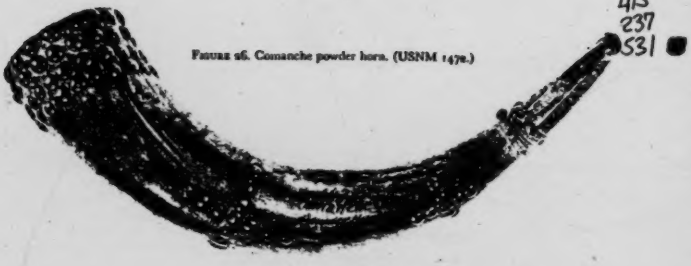

FIGURE 26. Comanche powder horn. (USNM 1478.)

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FIGURE 27. Comanche war whistle. (USNM 5964.)

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FIGURE 28. Karankawa war club. (USNM 5458.)

[p. 175]

 profusely with brass tacks in four bands near the base end, and two crosses spaced at equal distances of the length of the horn.

Comanche War Whistle Figure 27

Berlandier mentions the Comanche war leader's use of a whistle to blow commands to his followers while in action against the enemy.[10] One of these whistles, collected by Berlandier, is pictured in Figure 27. It is made from the ulna of an eagle and is 19.5 cm. in length. Open at both ends and with a triangular finger stop cut in one side, the whistle is provided with a cord of twisted rawhide for suspension from the leader's neck. While among the Comanche in 1883, shortly after the intertribal wars ended, Ten Kate was told of the former use of an eagle bone whistle to sound signals in battle.[11] George Bird Grinnell describes the Cheyenne use of a bone war whistle.[12] This was not an instrument peculiar to the Comanche.

Karankawa War Club Figure 28

A war club of the Karankawa Indians of the Gulf Coast is made from a single piece of ironwood (Ostrya sp.). The burl forms a head 10 cm. in diameter, and the projecting branch provides a handle 36 cm. in length. Although this club weighs but one pound, ironwood is an exceptionally hard and strong material. This must have made an effective weapon in close combat. The Indian who made this weapon must have shown considerable ingenuity in recognizing the potentiality of this abnormal tree growth as a war club. It is improbable that ironwood burls were typical Karankawa weapons, because they were uncommon in nature.

This club was obtained by John Varden, proprietor of the Washington Museum in the District of Columbia, while he was in New Orleans on a collecting trip in 1838. He recorded the specimen as a "War club of the Crank-a-War Indians of Texas" from a "George W. Chambers." Although Berlandier did not collect this piece, it is contemporaneous with the specimens in his collection. It may be the only war club that has been preserved from the Karankawa, whom Berlandier met in 1829, less than three decades before that tribe became extinct.

Comanche Painted Rawhide Case Plate 18

Women were the painters of geometric designs on parfleches and other rawhide cases among the Plains Indians. A fine example of Comanche women's painting on rawhide appears in Plate 18. This case is made from a single piece of rawhide folded twice to form the front, back, and triangular top flap of the case. When folded the case is nearly square—26 cm. high by 28 cm. wide. The case is laced tightly together at the sides with long narrow strips of rawhide, which also provide decorative fringes, some as long as 48 cm. This form of case was well known among the Blackfoot and neighboring tribes of the Upper Missouri as early as the 1830s and was used to hold sacred objects. The painted designs in green, red, and black on the front of

10. Page 71.
11. Ten Kate, 1885, p. 7.
12. Grinnell, 1962, vol. 1, p. 204.

[See p. 180-B--Analyst.]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 178]

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FIGURE 29. Comanche feathered bonnet. (USNM 1475.)

[p. 177]

178 this Comanche case resemble, however, the geometric painted designs of the Cheyenne more closely than those of the Upper Missouri tribes.[13]

Comanche Beaded Pouch Plate 19

Berlandier termed a beaded pouch of unusual shape in his collection a Comanche "game bag." It appears as Plate 19[A] William Bollaert, however, pictured a pouch of nearly identical size and shape among the articles taken from the Comanche who attacked Corpus Christi in June 1844. (See Figure 18, upper left.)[B] Perhaps this pouch served for holding medicines or valuable war equipment. The soft skin pouch is 29 cm. wide at the top, and each of the two finger-like projections provides a pocket 25 cm. deep. A series of buckskin tiestrings serves both to hold together the front and back pieces of skin forming the pouch and to provide a decorative fringe. Virtually the entire front of the case is decorated with beadwork in the large or "pony bead" size. The border and two equal-armed crosses are in white, the background in blue beads. The edge of the top flap is decorated with fringe. The beads on this flap are applied in the lazy stitch in three bands: the lower and upper bands are of white and blue "pony beads" while the center band is of the much smaller "seed beads" in white and red.

We know that Spanish officials presented beads to the Indians of Texas during the 18th century and that Dr. Sibley reported Comanche fondness for blue beads in 1807, but this may be one of the earliest examples of Comanche beadwork that has been preserved.[14]

Feathered Headdress Figure 29

A very handsome headdress of a Comanche man is pictured in Figure 29. In form and construction it differs markedly from the more familiar feathered bonnet with beaded browband worn by the Comanche and Indians of many other tribes on dress occasions within the Reservation Period—the headdress that has become the widely recognized symbol of the North American Indian.

This headdress has two major parts, a cap and a trailer of feathers. The cap is fashioned of two pieces of soft-dressed skin of equal size, one forming each side, sewn together with sinew along the vertical midline of the back. It is made to cover the sides, back, and top of the wearer's head but does not extend as far forward as his brow. The lower borders extend to points at the front of each side. The upper part of the cap is covered with red trade cloth, and this, in turn, is decorated with a band of beadwork passing over the top

13. Wissler (1910, pp. 77–78) pictures a side-fringed rawhide case from the Blackfoot and mentions similar cases from the Sarsi, Gros Ventres, Arapaho, and tribes of the Northwestern Plateau in the collections of the American Museum of Natural History.

14. On May 20, 1770, De Mézières requested "two arrobas of beads, white, blue and red" for presents to the chiefs of the Comanche and neighboring tribes, and in 1779 listed 54 pounds of glass beads received for the same purpose. (Bolton, 1914, vol. 2, pp. 201–02, 244.) Dr. Sibley found that the Comanche in 1807 were indifferent to many articles of trade desired by other tribes: "Blue & Red Stroud, Vermillion, Blankets, Blue Beads & knives, are almost the only Articles they Seem Anxious to obtain." (Sibley, 1922, p. 81.)

A [See p. 180-C—Analyst.]
B [See p. 169—Analyst.]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 180]

180 of the head at the front. The designs are long, interlocking triangles of the larger size embroidering beads, sometimes referred to as "pony beads," sewn to the base in a lazy stitch. The triangles pointing forward are of sky blue and those directed backward of white beads. Toward the back of the cap a band of clipped turkey vulture feathers extends over the top, behind which are sewn short narrow strips of rabbit skin. Much longer strips of rabbit skin, each tied to the lower edge of the red cloth, serve as dangling pendants from each side of the cap.

The trailer consists of 43 secondary wing feathers of the immature golden eagle. The uppermost six feathers are tied to the back of the cap. Each feather is secured in place by passing it through a hole in a strip of rawhide (2 cm. wide), looping the basal end of the feather around a buckskin cord, and wrapping it with sinew. The slotted rawhide strip through which the feathers pass serves as a spacer to keep the feathers an equal distance apart.

In view of the known relationship between the Comanche and Shoshoni, it is of interest to find similar caps worn by Shoshoni Indians pictured in Alfred Jacob Miller's drawings and paintings based upon his visit to the fur traders' rendezvous in Wyoming during the summer of 1837.[15]

Although a Comanche warrior may have worn this feathered headdress in battle, there is no reason to believe it was more or less typical of Comanche war headgear than several other types. The headdress of the famous Comanche war chief, Cuerna Verde (Green Horn), was described as early as 1768 as "a green horn on his forehead, fixed in a headdress, or on a tanned leather head piece."[16] A two-horned bonnet captured from the Comanche who raided Corpus Christi in June 1844 is depicted in Figure 18. Lino Sánchez y Tapia's watercolor of Comanche warriors (Plate 3)[B] shows both a horned buffalo hide cap and a bonnet of upright plumes. David G. Burnet, who knew the Comanche in 1819, wrote of them, "The head-dress is as various as their fancies can suggest and their means supply. Parrow-a-fifty's parade head-dress was a cap made of the scalp of a buffalo bull, with the horns attached in proper position. . . . They sometimes load their heads with feathers, arranged in lofty plumes, or dangling in the air in pensile confusion, or wove into an immense hood."[17] It is apparent that individual preference was reflected in the variety of Comanche headgear worn prior to 1850.

Feather Ornaments Figures 30–31

A circular ornament composed of 57 clipped turkey vulture feathers, carefully strung on a thin buckskin cord by doubling the end of each feather around the cord and tieing it securely with sinew, is shown in Figure 30.

15. Ross, 1951, pp. 34, 127, 199.
16. Thomas, 1940, p. 187.
17. Burnet (1851, p. 133) and Wallace and Hoebel (1952, pp. 82–83) claim that the well-known "war bonnet" of the Plains Indians (presumably the brow-banded type) was not common among the Comanche before the 1870s.

A [See p. 169—Analyst.]
B [Plate 3 has not been processed for the Files—Analyst.]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 184]

34: Ewers E-4 (no date) 1969 N06 Comanche N06
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PLATE 17. Comanche painted shield. (USNM 4430.)

[p. 180-A]

34: Ewers E-4 (no date) 1969 NO6 Comanche NO6
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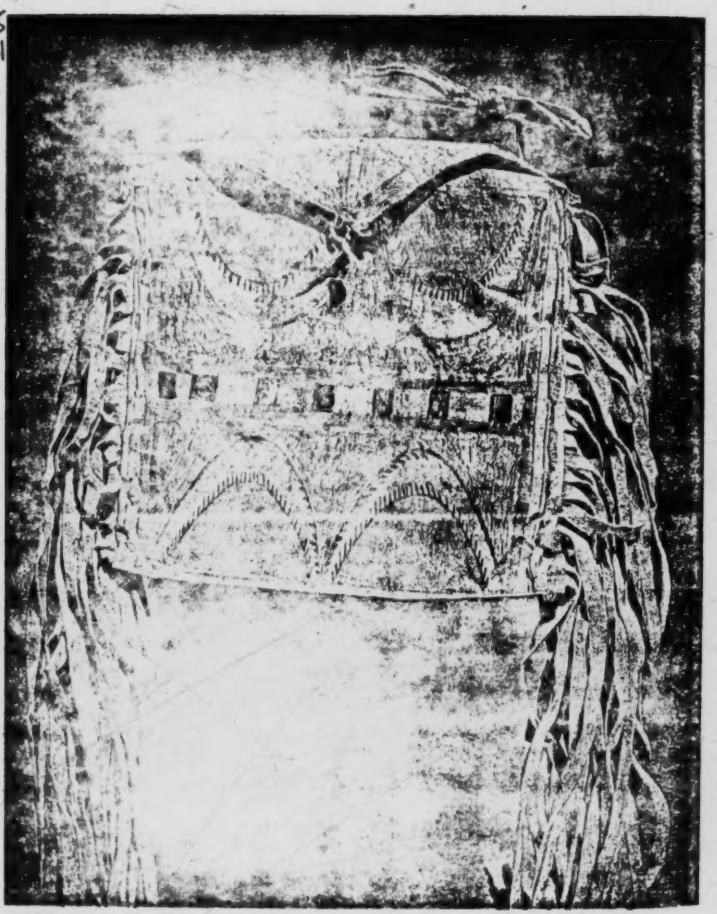

PLATE 18. Comanche painted rawhide case. (Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass., E 3780.)

[p. 180-B]

34: Ewers E-4 (no date) 1969 NO6 Comanche NO6
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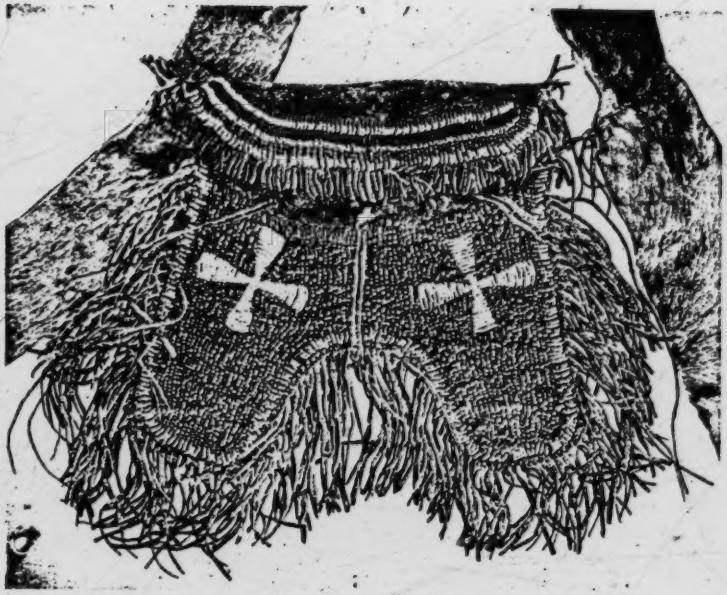

PLATE 19. Comanche beaded pouch. (USNM 1473.)

[p. 180-C]

34: Ewers E-4 (no date) 1969 N06 Comanche N06
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PLATE 20. Upper garment of a Comanche woman, worn by Vivian Poolaw, a Kiowa-Comanche. See also Figures 36 and 37. (USNM 148o.)

[p. 180-D]

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FIGURE 35. Comanche small beaded pouch. (USNM 1467.)

[p. 183]

Beaded Small Pouch Figure 35

415 (531) A small but elaborately decorated pouch from the Comanche (Figure 35) may have served a woman as a container for small toilet articles. Presumably it was worn on dress occasions, supported by the two twisted buckskin cords passed under a woman's belt. Probably the ends of the cords hung free so that the rolled metal cones attached to them would jingle as the woman moved, as would the similar metal jinglers attached to the cut fringes of the top and base of the pouch. The body of the pouch, of reddish-brown buckskin, measures but 8 cm. in height, and 7.5 cm. in its greatest width 415 across the bottom. The vertical seams at each side of the pouch and the tie 531 cords are edged with blue and white seed beads. Even smaller seed beads are used in decorating the front surface of the pouch and flap. Designs on the flap comprise a small rosette with four projecting triangles, and a border band of triangles on a blue ground. Rounded and less precisely defined elements appear in the 1.5 cm. wide beaded horizontal band at the base of the pouch. Bead colors are predominantly the primary ones, red, yellow, and blue, although a few green, pink, and white beads are used. Perhaps the most significant aspects of this pouch historically are its proof that the type occurred on the Southern Plains prior to 1850 and that, even at that early time, small seed beads were employed in its decoration.

Comanche Woman's Upper Garment Plate 20 and Figures 36–37

292 (28) [237] A handsome upper garment for a Comanche woman was ingeniously fashioned from a single deerskin (see Figure 36) which measured 186 cm. long by 60 cm. wide in its center dimensions. The basic form of the deerskin has been little altered, even the leg extensions being preserved. A transverse slit in the skin 25 cm. in length provides the hole for the wearer's head and neck, and the garment is draped over her shoulders with the head portion of the skin in front and the tail portion behind. Plate 20 shows a front view of this garment, as worn by Miss Vivian Poolaw, a young Kiowa-Comanche woman from western Oklahoma. Although the center of the hide falls but 52 cm. below the neck opening, the deer legs extend below the wearer's 292 wrists. Primary decoration consists of a blocky reddish-brown painted area 531 extending over the shoulders and down the center both in front and in back. (See Figure 37, showing a back view.) The garment is slightly longer in 292 back (54 cm. on the midline). Note also the long cut fringe at each side which conceals the upper arms and upper forearms, and the much shorter cut fringes on the bottom edges of the garment in front and back. Rolled 292 metal jinglers are attached to a few of the short fringes in front. There is a 531 decorative border of brass tacks around the neck opening and a row of buckskin string pendants about 15 cm. below the neck opening at both front and back. On one of these front strings are strung five large beads, two blue and three red.

292 Presumably this handsome garment was worn by a Comanche woman on dress occasions rather than for daily wear, which may account for its difference in construction from the fitted upper garment pictured in Lino Sánchez

[p. 185]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 188]

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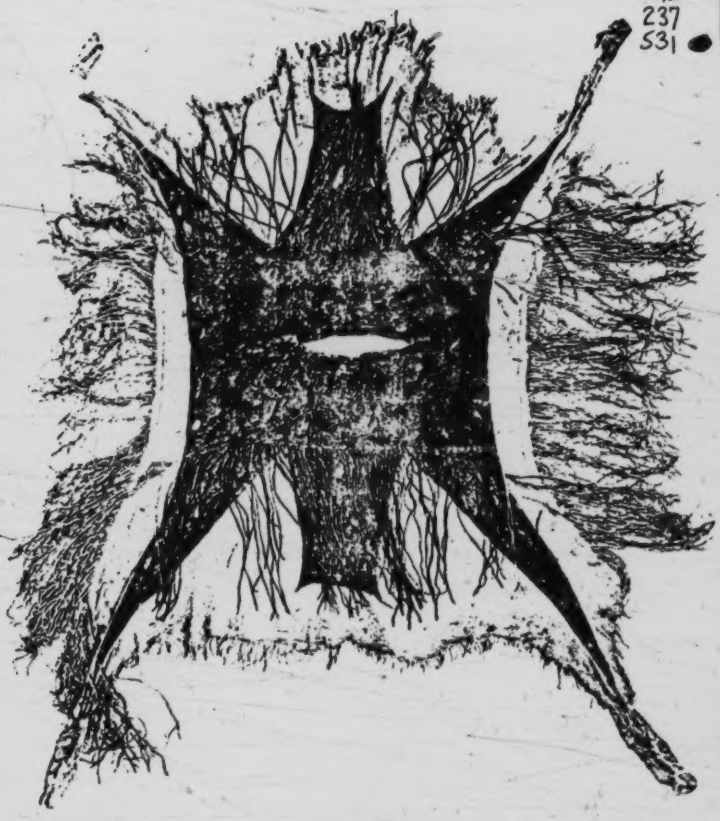

FIGURE 36. Comanche woman's upper garment, spread out, showing pattern of construction from a single deerskin. See also Plate 10 and Figure 37. (USNM 1480.)

[p.186]

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FIGURE 37. Back view of Figure 36 as worn. See Plate 20 for front view.

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FIGURE 38. Comanche collar for a pet antelope. (USNM 1458.)

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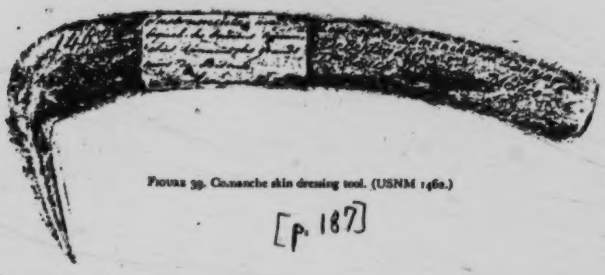

FIGURE 39. Comanche skin dressing tool. (USNM 1462.)

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